

# RC 112

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To whom it may concern,

Seems like every side is trying to twist the AK constitution to serve their own purposes. Who deserves priority on the resources (in this case salmon)? And who are the stewards of the land and it's resources?

The second question is easier ... NOT the Feds. The issue at hand should be decided by the people of Alaska.

The first question is harder ... but the answer is still *everyone*. Nowhere in the constitution does it say it's okay to eliminate one species in favor of another. Likewise, it should not be tolerated to eliminate one industry in favor of another. On the Kenai the two go hand in hand. The current state of the Kenai kings is unsustainable, and with it the Kenai sport fishing industry. If the sport fishing interests can't trump commercial interests, then certainly the same must be true in reverse. Commercial interests can't trump sport fishing interests. It's in the constitution that the resources be managed, and if a decision can't be made on balance based on the demands of both industries, consideration must be given first and foremost to the resource itself.

So I guess the real question is, at what point do you decide whether you are willing to let a species become "threatened" or even "endangered" under their current plan before something changes? I hope you will act before this happens. While it may be true there are unknown factors in play (high sea mortality, inshore pike (Mat-Su), disease, etc), it's never sufficient to stand idly by and do nothing. There are actions within your control that can and should be taken. Common sense dictates that you target the highest number of known mortality within your control. Of course that's the commercial nets whether it be targeted or bycatch. If you are not willing to address the very real issue of species in decline, it's up to the people of Alaska to stand up and demand better of the stewards of their resource or demand new stewards altogether.

While an argument can be made that the commercial industry generates more revenue for the state, the almighty dollar can never be sufficient justification to drive species to levels of instability. Action must be taken.